

RUSSIA

Sphere of the Social Sciences, they pass, in chapter II, to survey the "mental equipment of the trained investigator." This chapter is pure gold incidentally also biographic gold, since they have written nothing that tells one more about themselves. To the investigator, they give three warnings

"First, he must be able to focus his attention on what he sees, or hears, or reads

Secondly, he must be prepared to set himself deliberately and patiently to ascertain all the accessible facts about the social institution that he is studying, and not imagine that he can, until he has mastered these facts, discover the solution of any problem, or obtain any useful answer to any question that may have been in his mind

Finally, he must realise that he is biased, and somehow or other he must manage to discount this bias "

On attention, they are extremely suggestive. Its common failure, they point out, is due not so much to "intellectual dulness or slowness" as to egotism. True, the super-concentration of a Newton, an Edison or an Einstein implies genius, but

"The absence of adequate attention for the ordinary work of research may be due to sheer egotism. Indeed, most people, without being aware of it, would much rather retain their own conclusions than learn anything contrary to them

To be a good listener, you need genuinely to desire to hear what others have to say, rather than to utter what you have yourself to say. There is, in fact, a 'moral' defect at the root of the failure of most beginners to achieve discoveries. They fail, it has been said, 'because they set out to prove something rather than to arrive at the truth, whatever it may be. They do not realise that a good half

of most research work consists in the attempt to prove yourself wrong' "

That the student will not possess "complete intellectual disinterestedness" may, they say, be taken for granted. Bias there will be, learn therefore to know your own bias. When someone is described as "impartial" (above all in relation to political and economic questions) all that the description